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ABSTRACT

The Plantation Adult Basic Education Program started in 1970 as an alternative to poverty for sugar cane workers in Louisiana. The document discusses the various aspects of the poverty conditions that exist in the area, such as: housing, diet, health, education, and lack of consumer information, and how these existing conditions are to be changed through the adult education program. Also outlined are a brief history of the program; the various kinds of help obtained from the program's sponsor--Southern Mutual Help Association; four program objectives (raising the educational level of workers, advising workers of available assistance, assisting workers and their families with diet and food preparation, teaching budgeting and effective purchasing); the goal of process experimentation and analysis; and the program's rationale. Broad conclusions are discussed with special emphasis on the creation of a learning laboratory and future plans for the program itself. (BP)

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THE PLANTATION ADULT BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAM

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THIBODAUX, LOUISIANA

a project of

SOUTHERN MUTUAL HELP ASSOCIATION
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PLANTATION ADULT BASIC
EDUCATION PROGRAM

"In the heart of sugar cane country"

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION:

AN ALTERNATIVE TO POVERTY: THE PLANNED USE OF RESOURCES

PART ONE: THE SETTING:

CONDITIONS IN THE AREA SERVED:

PART TWO: A BRIEF HISTORY:

HOW THE A.B.E. PROGRAM STARTED:

PART THREE: THE SPONSORING AGENCY:

SOUTHERN MUTUAL HELP ASSOCIATION

PART FOUR: THE OBJECTIVES:

A. RAISING THE EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF WORKERS
B. ADVISING WORKERS OF AVAILABLE ASSISTANCE
C. ASSISTING WORKERS' FAMILIES WITH DIETARY CONCERNS AND FOOD PREPARATION
D. TEACHING BUDGETS AND PURCHASING

PART FIVE: THE PROGRAM:

A. THE RATIONALE
B. ANTICIPATED SERVICES

CONCLUSION: RESULTS TO DATE AND PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

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Research in the study of slavery in Barbados. To examine the relations with individuals in human nature and trial. Some with advertising experiences. Its gangs considered a work, American might advertise used by a loss of hope. [illegible] objection of property funds issued on succeeding generations. It is mysterious and the gang was only be broken by legal determinations on which its causes and conditions. The only allocations on cruelty is promoted, population density within to a restrained, parenting dependence by millions on a substantial success for the needs of an agreements services.

Slavery's specific manual given rise to and presentation crime, drudgeries, are suggest for human world and a variety of suffering including diseases, malnutrition, starvation and death. It derives as [illegible] punishment, destruction, fear and unintended projection. It is, at the center, a base system of capacity of opportunity to achieve, and allows amongst access to the human dignity may use outlook his tolerance ability. It destroys addiction, secretion and self-confidence, often carrying the children to despair of an escape and to view offspring who believe poverty to be a mode I of and dominant circumstances.

The pursuit of a human life to be seen a right and a responsibility to a free society. Those with primary be those who succeed in greatest degrees them other because they are human endowed, and their ability more effectively in pursuit personal accomplishments. This type of material achievement gives America its dynamic. What a free and democratic society cannot long survive is the survival by majority of opportunity ability to discriminate against the rights of those by more opportunity to overwhelming. The has sustained that the majority of them by and have, has contributions. "Can the will themself be the one hierarchy" in meaningless to those without hands.

So, the government and the executive decide to broaden the base of opportunity. Their duties is to use our principle resources, and to guarantee each poor person civilian, but to provide an equal the chance to develop and use the skills and capabilities. The poverty, his and this approach does not work. Education, employment, training, decent housing, consumer protection and health care must be provided on equal as a minimal basis to ensure that the poor [illegible] can find

[illegible] [illegible]

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PART TWO:

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PLANTATION A.B.E. PROGRAM

PART TWO: A BRIEF HISTORY

HOW THE PLANTATION A.B.E. PROGRAM STARTED

The Plantation Adult Basic Education Program for sugar cane workers began in 1970. Southern Mutual Help Association knew the need to do something to raise the educational level of workers and their families and vigorously pursued Federal, state, local and private funding for this purpose. In July, 1971, demonstration program monies became available from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. The initial grant was approximately $72,000.00, for one year of programming.

At the outset, there were volunteer workers led by a 17 year old freshman student at Antioch College named Paul Liem and a skilled, young Black woman of 19 years, Joyce Hadley, herself a product of sugar cane plantation life. There are presently seven staff members, all familiar with the plight of the workers from first hand experience.

Paul spent six months on the porches, in the fields and in the homes of sugar workers listening to their needs. The plantation workers themselves set functional education as a priority and actually designed the program. The families truly feel it is their program. The outstanding work of Paul Liem, the other qualified student workers and the original team members cannot be exaggerated. These gifted young people divided into teams of two persons and took their "message" to the plantation workers by holding classes in the homes. Often the most primitive conditions, not at all conducive to effective learning, existed and were transcended by the determination of the staff to communicate and to see results.

Project records indicate that in excess of five hundred workers or family members have attended classes or been helped in some way by the program since its inception. The staff has conducted sewing classes, crocheting classes, classes in recipe making, cooking and food preparation classes. The program has rendered assistance to pupils in reading, writing, arithmetic and other subjects consistent with the functional education thrust of the program.

The Board of Missions of the Methodist Church, from the beginning, assisted the program with generous monetary gifts and moral support. The local welfare offices have used Plantation A.B.E. staff as a valuable communication link from the service provider to those in such dire need of the services.

One of the important functions the staff sees itself continuing to perform is in the area of contacts, information-gathering and referral to existing agencies which are able to and willing to help.

H.E.W. provided a second year grant for continuation of the demonstration effort and to support the worthy aim of A.B.E. to find other, more local and more long term funding assistance.

The Plantation program has a staff of seven workers. There is a coordinator, a secretary and an instructor. There are four outreach workers. These titles are somewhat misleading, however, since most of the workers have the ability to provide instruction and do so regularly. These have, since the beginning of the program, been people with a purpose. They have no regular hours. They work long days and many nights because they must make themselves available when the workers have time for them.

Thanks to Dr. Ted Pennock and the Tuskeegee Institute, three of the staff members were able to spend two weeks on campus refining their skills and gaining new insights. Dr. Pennock gave his own time for a period of on-site analysis and assistance to the program.

With this type of help and with the patience and capability of the staff, the Plantation A.B.E. program has made great strides toward raising the educational level of workers and toward achieving their other goals. In one year alone, one hundred twenty-three persons were enrolled in the instructional portion of the program. Remembering that the program had far more to do then merely instruct, the success of the project to date has been a credit to those who had the vision, initiated the program and insisted that it continue in the face of a variety of obstacles. Their talent has made the effort a success.

PART THREE:

THE SPONSORING AGENCY

PART THREE: THE SPONSOR

SOUTHERN MUTUAL HELP ASSOCIATION

Southern Mutual Help Association, located in Abbeville, Louisiana, is the sponsoring institution for the Plantation Adult Education Program. This outstanding non-profit corporation is extraordinarily active in designing, obtaining support for and operating programs calculated to alleviate the misery of disadvantaged persons working and residing in Southern and Southwestern Louisiana.

S.M.H.A.'s program plan covers a wide range of services each based on an identified and indisputable need. The agency seems especially concerned about and singularly adept at helping seasonal and migrant agricultural workers. Included in their program schematic are highly organized and efficiently operated efforts in the areas of improving sub-standard housing, locating employment opportunities, a general purpose, comprehensive health clinic, emergency school assistance and, of course, the adult education program for field workers in the sugar cane industry.

These programs are characterized by tangible evidence of effective planning, enthusiastic participation, broad support including that of the communities they serve, and utilization of virtually all available resources. They are also carefully administered. Cost consciousness, good management and getting the greatest possible programmatic value for the dollar expended are trademarks of S.M.H.A. programs.

Competent personnel assist the various program units in planning, operating, finding and mobilizing resources, field work such as establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with community agencies, and upgrading the quality of services.

S.M.H.A. insists upon a blend of genuine compassion and unquestioned competence. They tolerate neither wasteful extravagance nor unbending adherence to traditional concepts. Their goals and programs are based on what can be accomplished to effectively meet the needs of their clientele within the scope of available resources. Alternatives to expensive programs are regularly examined. If they do not serve to diminish quality, these alternatives are utilized. Agency planners are willing to experiment, as all good social technicians must, but never lose sight of the ultimate goal: to enable economically, socially and culturally disadvantaged persons to have and avail themselves of the opportunity for richer, fuller, more productive lives.

The S.M.W.A. logogram shows two hands of separate races joining. Nothing could better depict the agency's philosophy. Experience indicates that citizens of varying races, cultures, backgrounds and economic levels, uniting with a single purpose and sincerity, accomplish that which appears impossible. S.M.W.A. sees the difficult, devises a work strategy, mobilizes support and measures effectiveness. They plan for ordered progress and they succeed in their plan.

PART FOUR:

THE OBJECTIVES

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PART FIVE:

THE PROGRAM

PART FIVE: THE PROGRAM

A. THE RATIONALE

The Plantation A.B.E. Program was funded first in 1971 as a result of a report researched through many miles and hours by a 17 year old precocious "intern" from Antioch College and the daughter of a fieldworker both hired and directed by the Southern Mutual Help Association.

S.M.H.A. operates programs based on the priority of peoples' needs in the area such as the Family Health Center in Franklin, a Youth leadership Program, a Tutoring Program, a Cultural Enrichment Program and is presently processing a proposal through the Department of Labor for a Manpower development program. S.M.H.A. is a grassroots organization serving in the 17 sugar cane parishes (counties) of South Louisiana. Its clients are the working poor.

Since under the law, the Plantation Adult Education Program is near the end of its eligibility as a Federally funded demonstration program, the present aim is to achieve an on-going bridge of cooperation with the Louisiana State A.B.E. Program so that mutual efforts and experiences will help change the dismal picture for cane workers. The poverty and illiteracy of plantation settlements is so much a part of the history of Louisiana that it remains largely ignored.

The attitude of the Louisiana State Education (A.B.E.) Department toward the Plantation program appears to be one of cooperation and collaboration toward a common goal. They have expressed such a willingness in two letters from State Superintendent of Education, Louis Michot to Dr. George Hann, Regional Commissioner H.E.W., Dallas, Texas. The State Department of A.B.E. supplemented the training provided for Plantation program staff by Dr. Ted Pinnock, in Tuskeegee in 1971 by accepting two staff members as participants in a two week institute at the University of Southwestern Louisiana in Lafayette at State expense. The Department also assigned a top staff member, Mrs. Marie Meno, formerly one of the working poor, to direct a workshop for teacher training for Plantation A.B.E. staff.

Subsequent to a recent visit by an evaluation team, the Director of the State A.B.E., Mr. James Soileau conducted a one day workshop with project staff to probe and analyze deficiencies pointed out by the evaluation report. At the

end of January, 1973, Mr. Soileau returned to evaluate program progress and provide more input from his 16 years of A.B.E. experience and from top members of his staff.

Mr. Soileau expressed pleasure with Plantation A.B.E.'s ability to do what no other educational group has been able to do in the past 70 years, i.e. to penetrate and be accepted by what he terms the "hard core" of adults working in the cane fields. These working poor believed for years that a day spent in school was a day's work lost.

ANTICIPATED CONTRACTORS
FOR PROVISION OF TECHNICAL SERVICES
F.Y. 1974

1. CPI Associates, Inc., Dallas, Texas

   Management
   Administration
   Record and Filing Systems

2. MRC (Multi-Racial Corporation), Washington, D.C.
   Data Systems and Analysis
   Resource Analysis and Development

3. CHRIS HARRIS PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHERS

   Documentary for Informational and Training Purposes
   To be Distributed Nationally, State and Regionally

4. NSF - National Sharecroppers Fund
   Manual

   Coordination
   Design
   Content
   Publication

5. TUSKEEGEE UNIVERSITY ~~OF FLORIDA~~
   Training in ABE
   Evaluation

6. STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
   TRAINING AND EVALUATION

7. SMHA CENTRAL OFFICE
   Coordination of Technical Services

ANTICIPATED TECHNICAL SERVICES

A. Management System Analysis

Management System Implementation

Survey of possible management systems
Selection of appropriate system and setting it up specifically thru task force assignment. This is designed to foster the team work concept which is a prerequisite for program production

B. Record System Analysis

Record System Implementation

This involves a survey of existing record systems and the selection of the appropriate system to facilitate program progress and evaluation. It further involves the actual implementation of that record system and the periodic checking of its effectiveness. The Record system is defined by the recording of all staff activities and progress, and program activities and progress. These records may range from a simple enumeration of contacts made or GED's processed to the more complicated records of social, attitudinal and motivational change

C. ADMINISTRATIVE TRAINING

This involves a workshop in government guidelines and forms as well as training in necessary skills for office competency

D. SETTING UP OF DATA SYSTEM

Data accumulation
Data compilation
Data analysis

This is critical to the eventual input of content into the manual and film as well as essential for

the State Department of Education in its attempt at ABE. Data could include in-depth quantification of economic background health and nutritional facts, motivational and attitudinal realities. It is a culture analysis, not a personal progress record and is essential to future attempts of ABE within the plantation cultures or similar cultures.

E. RESOURCE ANALYSIS AND DEVELOPMENT

This involves the critical task of finding local resources to deal with the defined problem employing our experimentally proven techniques, methods of bringing to bear local resources such as Louisiana Department of Education and local revenue sharing will be explored.

F. FILM DOCUMENTARY

25-30 minutes informational and training film with sound to be used at national, regional and state level outlining the problem and demonstrating effective solutions of that problem with regard to ABE

G. EVALUATION

Fiscal, administrative, and programmatic evaluation on a periodic basis with a three year experimentation analysis evaluation

H. TRAINING

ABE and Techniques of communication and "Seek its" Tuskeegee and University of Florida (g. Acker) and g. Tonamura of N.Y.U. How to establish a functional learning center using minimum staff and paraprofessionals

I. COORDINATION OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

Due to the low 8% indirect cost limitation, the immense task and expertise called for in the coordination of technical services can only be accomplished by the minimal addition of $1500 to provide for a coordinator. While the Executive Director has been and will continue to give more than 15% of her time toward the supervision of the program other expertise must be utilized to insure the effectiveness of the technical services component

J. MANUAL COORDINATION AND PRODUCTION

Design
Content
Publication

This manual will be a summation and an instructional booklet based upon the 3 year experiment of the Plantation Adult Education Program. Not only will it narrate an analysis of the problem, but it will provide a valuable training tool to the nation and to the State of Louisiana on successful and unsuccessful methods and techniques in ABE

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